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kyaungs has led to very imperfect and limited knowledge of these treasuries of sacred knowledge. Formerly it used to be said that the man who did not know the Thadda, the Pali "grammar," knew nothing. If this position were insisted on now, the number of ignorant people in Lower Burma would be somewhat startling.

But there are many difficulties before you get to the Abidhamma and its cognate subjects. Even in the Payeit Gyi there is a section called Ta-zet, or Ta-zet-thut, which has the credit of sending many a probationer back to the noisy, sinful world. According to the couplet—

Shin pyet ta-zet,
Loo pyet a-yet.

Brandy sends a man to hell;
Ta-zet spoils the saint as well.

It is a sort of religious *Pons Asinorum*.

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Besides prosecuting his religious studies, the shin is required also to attend on the pon-gyis and minister to their wants. He must lay before them at fixed times their daily food, the proper supply of water, the well-used betel-box, and whatever else the monk may require. He must of course go round every morning with the other members of the monastery, the begging-bowl strapped round his neck, accepting meekly, without word of thanks, or glance thrown to the right or left, even when he passes his father's house, the food poured in by the pious. When a pon-gyi goes abroad the neophyte may be required to follow, carrying his fan or umbrella, or perhaps an arm-load of palm-leaf books, if a function is to be performed anywhere. According to the strict letter of the law the ko-yin ought to eat only of the food presented in the morning, but a very great laxity has crept in in this respect, not only with the neophytes, but even among the professed members of the order. It is no uncommon thing for the parents of the youth to send in daily a special meal for him, or even, in the case of wealthy families, actually to keep a cook on the monastic premises to prepare his food. Such sybaritism is not by any means uncommon in Lower Burma, though even there hardly approved of. In any good monastery in Upper Burma, or

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indeed in any monastery at all, even in Mandalay, it would be promptly put a stop to. But where the monks themselves show the example of carnal weakness, the probationers cannot be expected to maintain the old austerity.

The shin is subject in every way to the discipline of the monastery, but there are very few additional rules really incumbent on him. He has to observe always the Sè-ba Thila, the ten commandments. Five of these are obligatory on all Buddhists at all times: the other five are supposed to be incumbent upon laymen only on sacred days and during Lent. The five universal commandments are:—

1. Thou shalt not take any life at all.
2. Thou shalt not steal.
3. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
4. Thou shalt not lie.
5. Thou shalt not drink intoxicating liquor.

The additional five are:

6. Thou shalt not eat after mid-day.
7. Thou shalt not sing, dance, or play on any musical instrument.
8. Thou shalt not use cosmetics, or colour the face.
9. Thou shalt not sit, stand, or sleep on platforms or elevated places not proper for thee.
10. Thou shalt not touch gold or silver.

These latter five are, it has been said, imposed upon laymen on sacred days, but the burden is very light, the people observing them or not, accordingly as they are observing the "duty-day." If they are not "keeping the feast," they conduct themselves precisely as they would on any other day, and buy and sell and attend pwès in their ordinary fashion.

This laxity is, of course, not open to the shins, but it cannot be said that the regulations, except perhaps as to eating, are very irksome. The seventh and eighth commandments seem by themselves peculiar, but they refer to filthy habits more explicitly set forth in the Patimauk, or book of the enfranchisement, containing the 227 sins which

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for the day, filter it, and place it ready for use; the more advanced novices and others of full rank to sweep round the sacred trees and water them; the elders to meditate in solitude on the regulations of the order. Meditation is beyond all other actions meritorious. The first meditation of the day should be on the miseries of life and the conviction that we cannot free ourselves from them; such thoughts are honourable beyond the founding of a pagoda, or praying for the salvation of all living creatures. Some gather flowers and offer them before the pagoda, to impress upon the mind the virtues of the great teacher and the weaknesses and shortcomings of human nature.

Then comes the first meal of the day, a light refection usually preceded by a homily or grace, to the effect that the rice is eaten not to please the appetite, but to satisfy the wants of the body; that the yellow habit is worn not for vanity, but to cover nakedness; that they dwell in this house not for vainglory, but to be protected from the inclemency of the weather; that medicine is taken merely to recover health, and that health is desirable only that they may attend with greater diligence to prayer and meditation. After the meal all proceed to study for an hour. The ko-yins repeat what lessons they have learnt and apply themselves to new tasks. The early morning is considered especially favourable for committing to memory.

It is now close on eight o'clock, and, arranging themselves in Indian file, they set forth in orderly procession, with the abbot at their head, to beg their food. Slowly they wend their way through the chief street of the town or village, halting when any one comes out to pour his contribution of rice, or fruit, or vegetables, into the alms-bowl, but never saying a word, or even raising the eyes from the ground. It is they who confer the favour, not the givers. Were it not for the passing of the mendicants, the charitable would not have the opportunity of gaining for themselves merit. Not even a glance rewards the most bounteous donation. With eyes fixed unwaveringly on the ground six feet before them, and hands clasped beneath the begging-bowl, they pass on, solemnly meditating on their own unworthiness and the vileness of all human things. There are

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naturally certain places where they receive a daily dole; but should the open-handed good wife have been delayed at the bazaar, chatting with her gossips, or the pious old head of the house be away on a journey, the recluses would rather go without breakfast than halt for a second, as if implying that they remembered the house as an ordinary place of call. It is a furlong on the noble path lost to the absentees, and the double ration of the following day is noted without a phantom of acknowledgment. So they pass round, circling back to the monastery after a perambulation lasting perhaps an hour or an hour and a half. Some mendicants, especially the more austere, return as soon as their thabeits are well filled; others apparently walk for a certain fixed time, and if the bowl is filled before this time is over, they empty it carefully on the side of the road. This is not wastry; the food is eaten by the dogs and birds of the air, and the merit to the givers is the same.

On their arrival at the monastery, a portion of all the alms they have received on the tour is solemnly offered to the Buddha, and then all proceed to breakfast. In former times, and according to the strict letter of the law, this ought to consist solely of what has been received during the morning; but a very great number of monasteries have, sad to say, fallen away from the strictness of the old rule. Only the more austere abbots enforce the observance of the earlier asceticism. Certainly in the great majority of the kyaungs of Lower Burma there is a man, not a monk, called kappiyadayaka, or supporter, who provides for them a much more delicate and better dressed meal than they would have if they ate of the miscellaneous conglomerate turned out of the alms-bowl. That indiscriminate mixture of rice, cooked and raw; peas, boiled and parched; fish, flesh, and fowl, curried and plain, usually wrapped separately in plantain leaves; cocoa-nut cakes and cucumbers; mangoes and meat; is very seldom consumed, in the larger towns at any rate, by any but the most rigidly austere. It is handed over to the little boys, the scholars of the community, or to any wanderers who may be sojourning in the kyaung, who eat as much of it as they can, and give the rest to the crows and pariah dogs. The abbot and the pyin-sin find a smoking hot

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breakfast ready prepared for them when they return from their morning's walk, and are ready to set to with healthy appetites. This question of Sybaritism is a chief source of dispute between the rival sects of Mahā and Sulagandi. [795]

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Breakfast done, they wash out the begging-bowls, and chant a few lauds before the image of the Buddha, meditating for a short time on kindness and affection. During the succeeding hour the scholars are allowed to play about, but must not make a noise, or indulge in quarrelsome games; the religious pass the time in leisurely conversation, or in any other way they please; the kyaung po-go usually has visits from old people, who come to pay their respects, or perhaps the kyaung-tagā, the founder of the monastery, the patron of his benefice, comes to consult with him on various matters, or to converse about religion and good works. The etiquette observed on these occasions is always very stately and ceremonious. Whoever approaches, whether it be the poorest villager, the founder of the monastery, or the governor of the district, all alike must prostrate themselves three times before the yahan, and, with uplifted hands, say, "In order that all the sins I have committed, in thought, in word, or in deed, may be pardoned to me, I prostrate myself three times, once in honour of the Buddha, again in honour of the Law, and thirdly in honour of the Assembly, the three precious things. By so doing, I hope to be preserved from the three calamities, from the four states of punishment; and from the five enemies, fire, water, thieves, governors (literally translated burdens), and malevolent people." The sayā replies: "As a reward for his merit and his obeisances, may the supporter (tagā) be freed from the three calamities, the four states of punishment, the five enemies, and from harm of what kind soever. May all his aims be good and end well; may he advance firmly in the noble path, perfect himself in wisdom, and finally obtain rest in ne'ban." Whenever the visitor addresses the yahan he joins his hands together, and sitting as he does on a mat, slightly bends the body forward, applying the title of payā, or lord, and making use of the honorific forms of speech specially reserved for the religious. The mendicant on his part calls the layman, of whatever

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rank, tagā, supporter, or, if the visitor be a woman, tăgama. Somehow or other these conversations, like the addresses of the religious to the people in the rest-houses, always seem to come round to the subject of the merit of almsgiving. The recluse will say that whatever is presented, silk robe, mattress, pillow, betel-box, is purified by the merit of the alms deed. The poor could fill the Lord Buddha's begging-bowl with a handful of flowers; the rich could not do so with a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand measures of grain. The path in the noontide heat is hard to one who has no sandals, and no water-gourd. What, then, will be the path after death to one who has not charity and regard for the ten precepts! Alms deeds can defend a man and protect him against the influence and the sources of demerits which are man's true enemies. Liberality is chief among the ten great virtues; it is the second of the three works of perfection; it is the absolute soul of the five renouncements. With all these a man becomes a Buddha, without them he sinks to be an animal, or worse still, to the fiery chambers of hell.

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When the conversation is over the layman bows down three times again, saying, "My Lord's disciple does obeisance"; or U tin ba thi "places his forehead on the ground," rises, backs five or ten paces, and then turning on the right, as he would at the pagoda, departs. There may be quite a long succession of these visitors, and their respects are paid all through the afternoon, if the weather be not too hot.

At half-past eleven, however, there is another meal, usually a light refection of fruits, and this is the last of the day. The pyin-sin are expressly forbidden to eat after noon. Solid food taken after the shadows slope to the east endangers purity. The blood becomes heated, and, moreover, when the stomach is loaded the mind becomes overclouded and unfitted for meditation. It is worthy of remark that the religious must eat, as they walk, slowly and with gravity, only putting moderate-sized morsels into the mouth, and constantly bearing in mind that food is not intended for the gratification of the flesh, but for the nourishment of the body. The ceremony called a-kat must also be care-

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in the country. A very common scene shows the punishment which awaits fishermen in the next existence. The miserable destroyer of animal life is represented as dangling by the tongue on a fish-hook, while demons jerk him into the air, and drop him back into a lake of burning pitch. Many of them have inscriptions below to explain the subject of the picture. Thus in Pagàn:—

"When King Ne-bin Min-gyi reigned in Methila over the ten governors, according to the old books, the Thagya Min came from the nat heavens to help him."

"In the Monastery Yatana Shwe-daing, our Lord preached the Patenôn Tagayo, and remained several days."

"Shin Thumeda (Gautama), in the land of Thudawdana, received the Buddhaship under the banyan tree."

"Payā Alaung Theidat (the embryo Budh, Prince Siddartha), the King's son, married 4000 charming Yathe-mya."

"Our Lord rides on the elephant Nalagiri."

And so on in great variety. One also often finds such a notice as this scrawled on the wall: "In order to be prepared and to gain happiness in the seats of men, of nats, and of ne'ban, the rice-pots are set in order, the images are erected, and the paintings on the walls painted."

The monasteries are built, supported, and furnished by the pious, but there are not a few of them that have considerable sums of money laid away, usually under the control of the kappiya-dāyaka, the layman who lives in the kyaung, and provides for the wants of its inmates. A number of the royal fields round about Aungbinle, where the Burmese army assembled to seek victory before entering on a campaign, were set apart for the use of the Royal monastery at Payā Gyi, and the revenues were kept in a huge money-chest, which was always under the care of a guard of soldiers. Much of the money was devoted to the adornment of the adjacent pagoda. None can be spent on embellishing the monastery itself. That would be as great a sin as if a monk should build one for himself, besides that it would be depriving the populace of much opportunity for gaining merit.

There are a few monasteries of the Pônnas here and there in the large towns throughout the country. These

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out with his axe and hollow with his finger-nails. There were a few such cells cut in the rocks at the back of Mandalay Hill, and visitors to the sacred spot occasionally came across one of the hermits striding along, wrapped in thought, grasping an iron staff hung with rings, the rattle of which warns the people to get out of the way and not disturb the holy man's meditations. A few go away from human society altogether, just as St. Simeon Stylites isolated himself on a pillar, and the old Culdee monks from the north of England and Scotland wandered off to the snowy wastes of Iceland, there to seek repose and relief from the turmoil of the world. It is said that the Thadda, the grammar, was added to the Bitaghat, that the hermits who had withdrawn to the jungle might not destroy the power of the sermons and lauds by mispronunciation. [788]

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Mandalay Hill is always occupied, for the spot is particularly sacred. King Mindôn used to send thither daily a hundred fowls which had been bought and saved from death, and the pious gave them plenty to eat. Similar proceedings caused the sneer of Purchas, "For men they hadde not an hospitall that were thus hospitall to fowles"; but this is hardly deserved, at any rate in Burma. There in every monastery the Kappiya-dayaka has a stock of money, raised by selling the presents given to the monks, which he devotes in charity to the well-deserving sick and to poor travellers, while any one is welcome at all times to shelter and food in the kyaung as long as he conducts himself properly. The yatheit may be looked upon with pious awe for his austerities and mortifications of the flesh, but the ordinary pyin-sin is more favourably regarded. The building of monasteries and the giving of presents to their inmates is a constant strain on the generosity of the people. It is far more difficult to keep the balance of merit on the right side in Burma than in other countries. Almsgiving is a constant and imperative expense, in addition to regular and personal worship at the pagoda. In Thibet wind or water drives the prayer-machines for extinguishing sin, and the goodman acquires merit while he is snoring at night with his wife at his back. In some parts practical householders are able to calculate exactly what is set down to

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735 their credit, by the expedient of having the prayer-wheels turned when necessary by oxen. But nothing of this kind is practicable in Burma. You must pay your devotions in person, and unless you supplement these by almsgiving, your prospects towards a next existence are not such as your friends can regard otherwise than with concern. Fortunately the more holy the receiver the greater the merit of the alms. To support one hundred ordinary men is not so much as to feed one yahan, and so on in increasing ratio. The merit of giving one single meal to a Buddha outweighs that of supplying ten million Pyitsega Buddhas with food. Thus the kyaungs are always well furnished, and their advantage in affording education to the children further gives them a hold over the country. It will be long before the number of monasteries decreases in Burma.

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1. Datu zedi, erected over relics of the Buddha, or models of these.

2. Paribawga zedi, over the sacred eight utensils, or their imitations.

3. Oddeitha zedi, enclosing images.

4. Damma zedi, enclosing the sacred books, such as the *Bitaghat thôn-bôn*, the three baskets of the Law, and other sacred volumes, like the *Bagawa*, appointed to be read during Lent.

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It may be well to remark that the word "pagoda" is not known at all in Burmese, either in its English or Cinghalese form, any more than the word Mandarin is known in China. Such a building is called a Zedi, from the Pali chaitya, meaning the offering-place, or place of prayer, but the expression Payā, applicable as well to the image as to the shrine, is most frequently used in reference to the more famous centres of worship.

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The greatest of the payās, such as the Shwe Dagôn in Rangoon, the most famous of all; the Shwe Maw-daw, the lotus-shrine of Pegu; the Shwe San-daw, the depository of the sacred hair at Prome; and the Mahā Myat Muni, the temple of the most exalted saint in Mandalay; all these were founded by single individuals, or brothers to whom the most excellent Master had given hairs from his head to deposit in the specified place. How the exact spot was found, and how successive kings increased the size of the first erection, and donations flowed in from the pious in all parts of the world to beautify and preserve the building, all these particulars are recorded in the palm-leaf records of the various temples. Many later Zedi, however, have been erected by villages, or by public subscription in whole districts, as pious memorials, or to commemorate some particular event, as well as for the obvious purposes of public convenience on the duty days of the month. Very many, and among them some of the most beautiful, are, on the other hand, the outcome of purely individual desire for merit. Some, such as the chaste, white Sibyo shrine at Mengôn, near Mandalay, are built in remembrance of individuals; the graceful pagoda mentioned being erected by a recent monarch in memory of a favourite queen. Under all, however, to render

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slab, and round this were arranged images of the chief disciples of Shin Gautama, each holding a golden bouquet. The jewelled casket containing the hairs was placed on the cradle, and high festival was held for many days. Numbers of other images of the Buddha himself, and of many eminent disciples, were placed round the sides of the tāpana taik, and countless offerings were made, the Tha-gyā king giving ten billions of gold, each of his queens forty thousand of silver; the father of the two brethren one thousand of gold, and many others equally great sums. But this was in the brave days of old, when imagination was vivid and evidence cursory.

Still even nowadays very costly offerings are often deposited in the relic chamber. An almost invariable gift is a representation in gold of the Lord Buddha, with the hooded snake raising itself over him, as in the images of Vishnu in India, or a great model of the Great Master as he received the supreme wisdom under the bawdi-bin. Examples of the last may be seen in the South Kensington Museum, as also of the Sabupati payā, representing him with the tower-like royal crown, the wings on legs and arms, and other emblems recalling the king's son who went out to dedicate himself as the Buddha and the conqueror of Mān-nat. Open-handed piety is twice as frequent as of yore, only the chroniclers of modern days have not the florid imaginations of their predecessors.

The dedication of a payā is a high festival, but there is no prescribed ritual in the sacred books, and each individual pôngyi, after reciting the precepts and the Itti pithaw, has a form of his own, embracing portions of the law and the sacred discourses. A prominent function in the service, as indeed always in giving alms, is the yeset-cha, the pouring out of water drop by drop on the ground. The great king Bimbathara did it himself from a gold cup when he presented the Weluwun or Bamboo-grove monastery, and so likewise it is recorded of the rich man Anātabeín. The idea is to share the merit of the action with all creatures, and at the same time to call to witness, besides the mathôndaye nats, all gods and men, that the donor may have due reward for his piety. The same thing is frequently

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done in order to legally hand over a gift. As the water falls drop by drop on the ground, the pôngyis read out the formulæ, the substance of which is as follows: "Firm in my belief in the three precious things, the Lord, the Law, and the Assembly, I make this offering that I may be freed from all present and future miseries. May all creatures suffering torment in the four states of punishment reach the happy seats of nat-dêwas. May all my relatives, friends, and all men inhabiting this earth and the ten thousand worlds, share in the benefits of this meritorious work. O earth, and ye spirits, guardians of this place, bear me witness to the piety of this gift."

It is worthy of note that it is explicitly stated that the inward dispositions of the giver have nothing to do with the merit resulting from a good work. The merits are strictly proportioned to the degree of sanctity or perfection of him who receives the alms. Hence the glorious release which awaits an otherwise bad man who erects a pagoda.

Zedis are of many shapes and degrees of elaboration, but one common idea may be traced through them all. If you ask a Burman monk the cause of the variations in the form of the payā, he will tell you that the Buddha left no instructions regarding them in the holy books, but had only said that a small mound should be raised over his bones in the form of a heap of rice. Apart from the relation in which the payā stands to the Buddha himself as the representation of the holy one sunk in meditation, the ostensible object is the preservation of relics, and these are to be laid in a shrine, like the lotus-bud of which the zedi is typical, and later by an extending of the lines this got the form of a bell or spire. In the Malla Lingaya Wuttu we are told that the infant Buddha in the womb of Queen Maia resembled a lotus-bud, or a beautiful pagoda, and the conjunction of this idea with the simple original tumulus has undoubtedly led to the typical form as now seen in Burma. The names for various parts of the building all recall the idea of the flower-bud, with its young leaves folded in adoration. Thus the rounded swelling just below the slender spire is called the hnget-pyaw-bu, the banana palm-bud, and on the extreme summit

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CHAPTER XXV

A HARVEST FEAST

ONE of the pleasantest and most social of Burmese country festivals is the ceremony which goes by the name of Tamanè Hto-thi. It occurs in the month of Ta'saungmôn, or of Na'daw, when the harvest is over and the first of the new rice piled up in a heap near the farmer's house, or perhaps stowed away in the capacious bottom of the hnaw, the big rice-boat, with its stern rising ten or fifteen feet above the surface of the water, and ready to start for Rangoon whenever its owner shall have hit upon a lucky day for commencing the voyage. In order to acquire a store of merit as well towards the next existence as towards the journey immediately in view; to back up the verdict of the astrologer from the horoscope with the good wishes of the holy men of the monastery; and, above all, to have a feast such as generally comes in somewhere in all Burmese religious proceedings, the cultivator resolves to give away twenty baskets or so of rice in alms and presents to the yellow-robed monks and his neighbours. A special kind of rice is always used on these occasions. Englishmen generally are unaware probably that there are a great number of varieties of rice, and that they differ very much in their flavour. Most people imagine that all rice has the same taste (no taste, they would probably say); and distinguish in a rough material way between Patna rice, which is very small, and Rangoon rice, which is considerably larger in the grain, and finally Carolina rice, which is bigger than any of them. A Rangoon merchant would go a little farther, and say that there are two varieties—the nga-sein, which he likes best and gets most of, and the nga-kyauk, which comes in more sparingly. But beyond these—

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exercise of so meritorious a ceremony as the expounding of the Law. Accordingly the great crowd, who have been looking on with much interest at the progress up the taper-lit saungdan, commence generally to prepare for sleep in the zayats which surround the place where the stage is, or failing accommodation there, curl themselves up as comfortably as may be under the bullock-carts which brought them thither. A still greater proportion, however, gather together in circles to have a gossip, and this talk, accompanied by much smoking and chewing of pickled tea and betel, goes on till far into the night. An excuse for the scant reverence paid to the sermon, to which none but a few white-haired men and women listen, is, that what part of it is not in Pali is in such suggagyi, such a lofty and stilted style of Burmese, that no one can follow it. Accordingly the discourse is hurried through and the performers come down, and after putting off their fine clothes receive the congratulations of their friends. The image remains all night in "Tawadeintha," and the following evening the descent is made with similar ceremonial, and so the dramatic part of the festival is concluded.

But this is very far from being the whole of the proceedings. On both days numerous presents are made to the yahans and offerings to the pagodas, and these are carried round about the town and by circuitous routes to the monasteries, so that the greatest amount of pleasure and publicity may accrue to the donors.

Chief among these offerings are always huge spires, some of them fifty feet high, representing Tawadeintha, and similar to that on the summit of the stage platform. They are made of bamboo covered with pasteboard, glittering with gold and silver paper and painted in many colours, and are carried by ten or twenty men, on long bamboo poles. Round about them dance all the youth of the quarter or village they are presented by, young men and girls, all in their brightest clothes. In Rangoon scores of these offerings wend their way to the monasteries under the shadow of the great Shwe Dagôn.

Mingled up in the procession come white umbrellas, gold umbrellas, lofty bamboo poles with gilt balls quivering and swaying at the top, big pasteboard images of nat-dêwas,

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bilus, princes, and animals, from the crawling turtle to the familiar two-legged (or six-legged, which you please) horse, all of them surrounded by their group of vigorous dancers. Most characteristic of the day are the padetha-bins, a sort of Turanian Christmas-tree, representing the fabled wishing-tree of the Northern Island and the heavens of the nats. In those regions the fairy branches bear whatever is wanted, from a savoury ragout to a complete suit of clothes. Upon earth the quivering bamboo twigs carry, dangling by strings, whatever the bazaar shops will supply, packets of scented soap, matchboxes, razors, clasp-knives, little looking-glasses, coloured-glass tumblers, candles, and dolls; and piled round the roots are heavier and more useful articles — blankets, mats, bales of yellow cloth, and earthenware or lacquer begging-bowls. These trees, each with its attendant band of dancers, are carried round and finally deposited before the house of the head of the monastery. Occasionally a ngwe padetha is offered, if the inhabitants of the wealthy districts of the town are particularly pious. This silver padetha is a tree similar to the rest, except that from its branches hang exclusively rupees and smaller silver coins, each wrapped up in a piece of tinsel or coloured paper. These silver trees, some of which are worth from 500 to 1000 rupees, are more frequently presented to the pagodas than to the monasteries. In the former case the custodians of the shrine take charge of the money for the purposes of repair and the payment of watchmen; in the latter, the kyaungthagyi, the kappiya da-yaka, or lay steward of the monastery, receives the money, as indeed he takes the miscellaneous collection from the other wishing-trees, and dispenses all for the benefit of the kyaung and the giving of alms to poor travellers. It is noticeable, however, that the ascetic Sulagandi monks would altogether refuse to accept such a temptation to break their vows as a silver rupee tree.

Spires and umbrellas, padetha-bins and hobby-horses, hover about the streets on the way to the monasteries all day long throughout the duration of the festival, and at night, after the mystery play is over, the bands which have been performing sedulously all day crash out again on the night air, and fragments of plays and songs are to be heard

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everywhere. Chief among the night amusements too is the presentation of the naga, the huge serpent-like dragon, a great monster often considerably over a hundred feet long, formed of thin paper, distended on bamboo hoops. Each of these has a handle attached to it and a lighted taper fastened inside, and is carried by a man. The body is white, shading off into a blood-red head and jaws, and as the creature writhes its long folds and twists and darts from side to side of the road, the effect from a distance is very fine and startling on a first view. He plunges and coils about till the candles are nearly burnt out, and then is deposited with other offerings on the pagoda. All through the day and night there are generous people about, ready to give meat and drink, cheroots and betel, to any passer-by who chooses to afford them an opportunity of acquiring merit, for any act of charity accumulates kutho, even though the object aided be base.

The offerings to the monks are also not confined to the fruit of the padetha-bins. On the third day of the feast the image of Shin Gautama is carried away from the bamboo erection and dragged through the town in the early morning, the monks following with their begging-pots and receiving the abundant alms prepared for them at the Sôndawgyi feast, which is intimately connected with that of Tawadeintha, and commemorates as much the Lord Buddha's issuing from the ne'ban kyaung at Sampa Thanago to beg for his food on his return from the second heaven, as the pious gift of nogana, made after the long fast, by Thuzata.

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527 than any implying more of a religious character—assumes the appearance of a gigantic reception, or *conversazione*. Streets and quarters of the town make up a common purse for general decorations and the erection of stages for hired troupes of actors, in addition to individual effort. The dates are arranged beforehand so that no two streets shall make their effort on the same night, and so lessen the enjoyment of the public, or draw away from the expected number of spectators. A committee is elected, or appoints itself, and having got as much money as possible, hires the best available dancers and actors for the zat pwè, if possible a puppet troupe also, and in addition, as many unattached mummers and clowns as can be got, whose business it is to dance up and down the street in the guise of dragons, snakes, nagās, and demons of all sorts, and amuse such of the visitors as cannot get near enough to see the set play, or prefer walking about talking to their acquaintances. Bands are engaged in profusion, flower-garlanded arches erected at the ends of the street and at intervals along its length, and gay Chinese lanterns hung up everywhere. Complimentary packets of le'hpet, pickled tea, serving as invitations, are sent out in profusion, but the non-receipt of one of these does not deter anybody, and all comers of whatever nationality are welcome.

735 262 Nowadays the monks are wont to complain that the presents customarily made them at the Tawadeintha feast are not nearly so valuable, or even so satisfactory, as they used to be. But it is different with the Sôndawgyi *fête*. There the emblems of the archetypal nogana are all edible and of the most sumptuous kind. In every house the offerings for the ascetics are set out for display all night long and make a goodly show, if the process can hardly be supposed to improve them for consumption. Mountains of cooked rice send out spurs of beef and pork, with flat lands of dried fish and outlying peaks of roasted ducks and fowls, the legs with their claws and the neck with the head and beak being extended as if they had been drawn out tight to exhibit their greatest length. Ngapi, fish paste, in all its malodorous varieties of ngapigaung, seinsa, dhamin, nga-thalauk, abounds, and loads the air with suggestions of a fish-

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curing village, or an unclean fishmonger's in the dog days. Chinese patties of sugar and fat pork, plates full of fried silkworms, maggots from the top of the cocoa-nut tree, salt-pickled ginger and fried garlic, and a variety of other dishes beyond the ken of occidental cookery, abound all down the long tables. Alternating with these, and perhaps more pleasant to look at, are heaps of fruit, oranges, citrons, shaddocks, plantains, with here and there a late durian or two, rivalling the ngapi in its odour, and the brick-red or purple rind that conceals the luscious "snows" of the delicious mangosteen. Plentiful tins of sardines and Reading biscuits, with somewhat muddy-looking Bengali-made lemonade, give evidence of the progress of "civilisation"; and plates of betel with the fresh green leaves of the betel-vine suggest how the morrow's afternoon will be passed in well-filled meditations by the pôngyis of the neighbouring monastery.

The house itself is decked out on a corresponding scale of magnificence. To the uninitiated foreigner an ordinary Burmese hut presents about as unfavourable raw material for decoration as can well be imagined. Built of rough teak planking, or of split bamboo mats, and raised a few feet off the ground on posts, it resembles a marquee tent in shape and in size (according to the principle of the old Joe Miller story about the stone which was as big as a lump of chalk). On all ordinary occasions there is not a vestige of furniture in it. A row of earthenware pots with water, a couple of wooden boxes, and the rolled-up mats and blankets whereon the household sleep, are the only things to be seen. The sides and ceiling are grimed with the smoke of the fire that cooks the daily meals; the floor stained with smudges of oil and red blotches of betel. Yet this unpromising shanty the Burman transforms into a palace chamber, or stage-like fairy bower. The sides of the house are thrown up towards the street, so that the room assumes the appearance of a verandah. The floor is covered with thick bamboo matting finely woven, over which bright-flowered rugs are spread. The dingy sides of the house are draped with flags and kullagās, elaborate stitched pieces of tapestry, ten or twelve feet long, and reaching down to the ground. White, or

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sionally chance upon windfalls, but their wealth is of no use to them, for they can never retire, even in the extremest age. Like the pagoda slaves they have their headquarters in Pagān, and some of them are vehemently suspected of being runaway parakyuns from other parts of the country. But the advance in public estimation is of the slightest possible character. Among the sellers of nantagôn and other pagoda essentials, at the shrines of Rangoon, Prome, and Pegu, are here and there a few tadaungsa, tired of their wandering life; yet, notwithstanding the ill-favour with which they are regarded, they are never stinted for food.

Lepers and others afflicted with loathsome diseases, deformed and mutilated persons, are regarded more with pity than with aversion, but they are not the less outcasts, and must live in villages by themselves, or with the tadaungsa and parakyun if indeed they do not scorn to do so. They usually line the pagoda steps on a duty or feast day, and receive abundant alms, every third or fourth worshipper dropping a handful of rice or a copper coin into the basket or platter laid before them. The dislike to maimed people is very singular, and led to curious incidents in the first and second Burmese wars. The wounded men brought into the field hospitals refused to have arms or legs amputated to save their lives, and it is a matter of not unfrequent occurrence even now, in the hospitals, for a man to tear off the bandages wrapped round the stump, that he may not survive his misfortune and become a shame to his family. In some parts of the province the taint, or even the suspicion of leprosy in a family, becomes a fertile source of villainy. If the suspected person or the head of the house be at all well-to-do, heavy sums are extorted by the headman of the place in return for permission to stay on in the village, and sometimes informers make a good thing in demanding hush-money. But no amount of payments could save a man badly affected with the disease from being driven out of the town. Even in large towns the aversion is equally strong, and unless the leper is a rich man he has to live in prescribed quarters among the outcasts already mentioned. Equally despised are all those who have anything to do with funerals, either in making the

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When a fire occurred in the Golden City, it was usually a very big one and burned until it could find no more fuel. There were two reasons for this. The most obvious was, of course, that wood huts, with an inflammable roof like thin grass thatch, caught fire with the slightest spark; and there was nothing in the shape of a fire-engine, even in the palace. The second was very characteristic of a despotism, and vastly more disastrous. Immemorial tradition associated a conflagration with a revolution. When an attempt was to be made to seize the throne, the attention of the people and the soldiery was always diverted by incendiary fires. Therefore when a house took fire the people found nearest to it by the night watchmen were always arrested and made responsible for the catastrophe. As a natural consequence, the moment flames burst out, not only the inmates of the house, but all the neighbours took to their heels and ran, without incommoding themselves with even the smallest portion of their property. A few of the royal troops came down after a time and unroofed a house here and there, and perhaps even pulled down some altogether, but their efforts as amateur firemen were usually of the most feeble and futile description, and the flames went on till there was nothing more to burn. Next day the unhappy burnt-out people came back and made for themselves little hovels of bamboo matting among the charred posts till something better could be run up again. The neighbouring quarters contributed something to support them, or they got their meals at the monasteries, and in a few months all traces of the fire had disappeared, the same rickety huts with the old scanty store of wares rose up again, and the scorched leaves fell off the trees and were replaced by fresh green foliage.

The population of Mandalay was a very queer one. Of the Burmans the great majority were soldiers or hangers-on of the various great men about the court. The residuum was composed of a few honest tradesmen and a vast quantity of bad characters, broken agriculturists, gamblers, thieves from Lower Burma, and outlaws from all parts. The number of yellow-robed yahans was extraordinary. King Mindôn used to give alms to five thousand of them daily. The jars of rice were arranged in long rows on a platform erected

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specially for the purpose, with mountains of bananas, and trays heaped up with ngapi, curries, and condiments of all kinds. Thibaw Min was not so eager for merit, and actually went the length of driving a couple of thousand of the holy men out of the capital. Still even he gave them periodical feasts, and there were at least ten thousand of the religious in the Golden City and its immediate neighbourhood. Besides these there were numerous other nationalities; the Chinaman, smooth-shaven and prosperous as always, whether gaunt and big-boned from Yün-nan and Szuch'uan, or sleek and sturdy from Rangoon and the Straits, defying the most greedy official to rob him of his profits, and drinking his tea and smoking his opium-pipe with supreme composure and good-humour; the bearded Surati with solemn face and Jewish tricks of trade; the Palaung come down from the north with his bamboo rafts laden with pickled tea; the stalwart Shan with baggy blue or white trousers and tattoo marks down to his ankles, journeying in a long caravan with sword-blades and iron-work, and a cavalcade of mountain ponies; the heavy, easy-going Karen; the lithe, treacherous Kachin, bringing presents perhaps from his village, and on his way down spying out villages easy to raid in a night attack; all these, and a host of others, might be seen any day in the Royal City of Gems. There were not a few white men too, even latterly, when evil times fell upon them, and there were not the pickings that were to be had when Mindôn Min was king. But many of them were there sorely against their inclination. Mandalay had become an asylum for insolvent debtors, runaway soldiers and sailors, and unlucky adventurers from British territory, just as Rangoon used to be for India in the old Burman days. There were numbers of French and Italians in government service, as military instructors and superintendents of the various factories; officers who had been cashiered, or disowned by their families, or were in other ways under a cloud. One Count there was, who constituted the scientific branch of the service in himself, manufactured and sold fruit syrups to the captains of steamers, preserved a pocket-handkerchief with a coronet in the corner, and carried his lands in his finger-nails. The old king was shamefully cheated by a variety of speculators, not a few of them Englishmen.

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764 heavy punishment under Burman rule. Latterly some
925 laymen in Rangoon have even been bold enough to glorify the
178 funerals of their relatives with keinnaya, figures of men or women with bird-like feet and lower extremities. These spangled toys, which are commonly to be seen in all monasteries, are properly only used at the last ceremonies of a member of the sacred order. But when some men are bold enough even to flaunt the royal white umbrella, it is hardly to be expected that the distinctive honours of the yahans would be respected.

764 The procession having been formed, a start is made.
● [735] At the head come the alms intended for the monks and for the poor, some carried by men, some by women, the sexes going in separate lines. After this come the pyin-sin, never in any very great numbers, unless the a-hlu be particularly bountiful. Following them comes the band, and often a troop of singers. These are always hired for the purpose, and their callousness is as little to be cast up against Burman natural affection as the unlovable doings of the mutes at an English funeral. Close upon the musicians comes the bier carried by six or eight young men. Then in a general crowd follow the relations, friends, and neighbours, all on foot. Many passers-by, total strangers, join in the procession from motives of piety. Here and there the men carrying the bier stop and dance in a curious fantastic way to the measures of
[535] the dirge of the singers. The funeral *misereres* are usually the composition of an improvisatore in the chorus, and deal with the life and death and good actions of the deceased. A measure called maung pyaung is the most generally used.

Occasionally there is a tug-of-war with a rope as at a pôngyi's funeral, one side exclaiming, "We must bury our dead"; the other, "You shall not take away my friend." As a matter of necessity the former party must conquer, but they sometimes have to get recruits from the crowd before they can manage it.

764 It is a matter of regulation that a funeral should never
923 go to the north or to the east. The graveyard is usually to the west of the village, and the dead should all be carried out of a walled town by a gate reserved for this purpose. In Mandalay this a-mingala tagă was that to the south-west,

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and it was avoided by those who had business in the myo as cursed, as indeed its name imports. Other rules are that a corpse must never be carried towards the centre of the town, still less can it be taken into it. If the man has died in the jungle, and the funeral has to pass a village, it skirts round the outside of it.

When the cemetery is reached, the coffin is taken out and placed on the ground near the grave. The immediate mourners collect round about it; the rest of the people go to the zayats, of which there are always several at every graveyard. The music stops as soon as this place is reached. The alms are set up in order before the pôngyis, and these again intone the five secular commandments, and the ten good works, besides a long string of Pali doxologies. As soon as they have finished they leave and file off to the monastery, the a-hlu being carried after them. The chief mourner at the same time pours water slowly out of a cocoanut shell, saying, "May the deceased and all present share the merit of the offerings made and the ceremonies now proceeding." This performance, called ye-set-kya, is a regular accompaniment of all almsgiving. The idea is that the earth will bear witness where men may forget. When Shin Gautama ascended the throne under the bawdi tree, Mān-nat, the devil, claimed that it was his, because he had discovered it first, and all his mighty host shouted aloud when he called upon them as witnesses. The Lord Buddha had no witness but the earth, and to it he appealed, asking whether he had not achieved the Three Great Works of Perfection, the Ten Great Virtues, and the Five Renouncements. The earth gave testimony to this kaung-hmu with a terrible roaring and a violent earthquake, so that Mān-nat and all his legions fled in terror. Hence the pouring out of water when alms are given.

While this is going on women are walking about the zayats distributing cheroots and sweet drinks, betel, le'pet, and biscuits among the visitors. The nearest relations are carrying out the final rites. The coffin is swung three times backwards and forwards over the open grave, and then lowered in. This ceremony, called utaikthi, is looked upon as a kind of final farewell, and after each person has thrown

792 871 the small boys, as day pupils. Monastic education is a traditional part of Burmese Buddhism, and almost all the men of Tadagale, whether reared in the village or elsewhere, have attended monastic schools for varying lengths of time.

792 872 876 The monastic school curriculum includes elementary reading, writing and arithmetic, rudiments of history and geography, heavily colored by Burmese cosmology and folklore, and instruction in Buddhist precepts and proper conduct. There is heavy emphasis upon proper conduct. Instruction takes the form of mass recitation and rote memorization. Discipline is strict and the inattentive pupil is kept alert, when necessary, by means of the rod. As indicated earlier, many parents in the village favor the monastic as against the public school because of the strict discipline and the emphasis upon conduct and religion.

793 Concerning the second function of the monks, officiation at certain rites, it should be indicated that because Burmese Buddhism is not a congregational type of religion, the monks are not called upon to officiate at regular assemblies in any fashion akin to the role of the Christian minister. The monks do, however, play an important part in the initiation of boys into the monkhood; and sometimes take part in funeral rites.

The monk's function of giving advice and guidance stems from the fact that he is regarded, in the thinking of the villagers, not only as one to whom the greatest respect and deference is due by virtue of his dedication to his life to religion, but also as a living repository of wisdom and universal knowledge. He is a person to whom one may turn in time of uncertainty, doubt or stress for personal counsel. Problems relating to the conduct of one's children; concern over persistent lack of success in one's economic activities; or even matters of health may be taken to the monk. A great deal of the advice rendered by monks is formulaic, folkloristic and magical in nature. Particular monks tend to acquire reputations as being especially wise and helpful in particular kinds of problems.

792 ●235 Support of the Monks. The monastery buildings and the land on which they stand are the property of the monastic order, held in perpetuity by grant of the government, free of taxation.

[624] The monks are supported by the donations of the villagers. Every morning a monk, accompanied by one or two monastic school pupils, passes through the village to collect offerings of food. As he enters the compound of each home a member of the household takes a pot of cooked rice, which has been prepared for the morning meal, and places a few large spoonsful in the monk's begging bowl. This minimum daily contribution of food is made by every Buddhist household, without exception; in addition, many families send bowls of curry and rice to the monastery. Giving food to the monks is an important act of merit to Burmese Buddhists. It is regarded as unthinkable that any household would refuse. When the hypothetical case was posed of such a deviant household, villagers agreed that such a family would be severely criticised and shunned in the village.

The few other things that the monks require for their austere existence are given by villagers on the important ceremonial days of the year. These items include robes, soap, matches, begging bowls, water strainers and needles.

796 Duty Days. The Burmese calendar is a lunar one, and in each month there are four days -- duty or sabbath days -- on which the villagers go to the monastery

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785 with the rainy season. The Buddhist monks take vows to live strictly by the Buddhist precepts and not to spend a single night away from the monastery during this time. The laity pledge to observe the fast from noon of the weekly duty day to the following dawn, an observance that at other times of the year is carried out by few people. Marriage must not take place during this sacred period; engagement contracted before the beginning of Waso should be consummated in marriage before the period begins, not carried over to its close.

On the full moon day that inaugurates this sacred period, the villagers make gifts of robes to the monks. Households sometimes pool money in a common fund from which the robes are purchased. The robes may be sent to the monastery or the monks may be invited to a donor's house to be fed and presented with the garb.

On the following day, the young people of the village go out in small groups to pick the 'Waso flower,' the flower of the Padauk tree (Pterocarpus sp.). In the evening, dressed in their finest clothes, they offer these flowers to the image of the Buddha that stands to one side of the main path of the village, about halfway between the northern and southern ends of Tadagale. Some travel to Rangoon to make their flower offering at the Shwe Dagon pegoda, the most famous of Buddhist shrines in Burma.

796 Thadingyut, the Festival of Lights. For three months, from the first day after the full moon of the month of Waso, until the first day after the full moon of Thadingyut (October) it is believed that the Lord Buddha is in the land of the spirits preaching to his mother. On the first day after the full moon of Thadingyut he is said to return to the world of human beings. For this occasion, lanterns are lit and houses are gaily decorated with them. The lanterns are made of colored paper, shaped into small cylinders and placed around a saucer in which there is a kerosene-soaked wick. Villagers nowadays purchase these lanterns ready-made in the bazaars of Rangoon and use candles rather than wicks in them. All over Rangoon, and along the road between Tadagale and the city, colored lanterns are lit and hung around the houses, fences and hedges, providing a bright and glittering spectacle. Many villagers go to Rangoon to see the lights at this time.

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•735 Kahtein, a Ceremony of Offerings to Monks. Between the day following the full moon of Thadingyut and the day after the full moon of Tasaungmon (November) the villagers observe Kahtein. On this occasion of giving gifts to the monks, the offerings are on a larger scale than those of individual households at other times of the year.

The village headman collects money from each house in the village for this observance. A total of about Rs. 1000 (ca. $200) is gathered to purchase gifts for each of the four monasteries located near the community. The presentation ceremonies for the various monasteries are held on different days, and many villagers attend all of them.

The purchasing of the gifts for the monks is entrusted to the headman. This is done in Rangoon and includes robes, food-carriers, utensils, crockery, brooms, and fans.

The ceremony takes place at the monastery. Each family cooks a meal of rice, curry and a sweet dish. All the food is pooled, and after the monks have partaken of their morning meal, the villagers eat. Music, dancing and singing

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goes on throughout the morning. About 2 P.M. a monk gives a sermon and recites prayers. One of the elders reads aloud to the assemblage an account of the expenditures for the gifts to the monks, concluding the event. 796 735

Animistic and Magical Beliefs

Underlying the elaborate organization and practice of Buddhism, there is a considerable belief in nats, or spirits, and magic. Spirit worship, supposedly contrary to the teachings of Buddhism and opposed by the monks, is indulged in to varying degrees by the villagers. In Tadagale one frequently comes upon small wooden box-like structures affixed to trees, on which there is usually a little food and perhaps a flower as offerings to a particular nat. There seems little doubt that animism was even more important among the Burmese prior to the coming of Buddhism centuries ago. As noted in the description of initiation and wedding ceremonies earlier, nat worship has become interwoven with Buddhist beliefs and practices. It is also manifested in beliefs concerning guardian spirits of houses and particular places and in theories of the causes of many illnesses, including bewitchment and mental disturbances. Mediums, specially versed in the ways of the nats and possessing knowledge of cures for spirit-caused maladies, may be called upon for assistance. 776 755 782

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essence of all truth. He is not cut off from society. There are other monks, and there are visitors, men and women. He may talk to them—he is no recluse; but he must not talk too much about worldly matters. He must be careful of his thoughts, that they do not lead him into wrong paths. His life is a life of self-culture.

Being no priest, he has few duties to others to perform; he is not called upon to interfere in the business of others. He does not visit the sick; he has no concern with births and marriages and deaths. On Sunday, and on certain other occasions, he may read the laws to the people, that is all. Of this I will speak in another chapter. It does not amount to a great demand upon his time. He is also the schoolmaster of the village, but this is aside entirely from his sacred profession. Certain duties he has, however. Every morning as the earliest sunlight comes upon the monastery spires, when the birds are still calling to the day, and the cool freshness of the morning still lies along the highways, you will see from every monastery the little procession come forth. First, perhaps, there will be two schoolboys with a gong slung on a bamboo between them, which they strike now and then. And behind them, in their yellow robes, their faces cast upon the ground, and the begging-bowls in their hands, follow the monks. Very slowly they pass along the streets, amid the girls hurrying to their stalls in the bazaar with baskets of fruit upon their heads, the housewives out to buy their day's requirements, the workman going to his work, the children running and laughing and falling in the dust. Everyone makes

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room for them as they go in slow and solemn procession, and from this house and that come forth women and children with a little rice that they have risen before daylight to cook, a little curry, a little fruit, to put into the bowls. Never is there any money given: a monk may not touch money, and his wants are very few. Presents of books, and so on, are made at other times; but in the morning only food is given.

The gifts are never acknowledged. The cover of the bowl is removed, and when the offering has been put in, it is replaced, and the monk moves on. And when they have made their accustomed round, they return, as they went, slowly to the monastery, their bowls full of food. I do not know that this food is always eaten by the monks. Frequently in large towns they are fed by rich men, who send daily a hot, fresh, well-cooked meal for each monk, and the collected alms are given to the poor, or to schoolboys, or to animals. But the begging round is never neglected, nor is it a form. It is a very real thing, as anyone who has seen them go knows. They must beg their food, and they do; it is part of the self-discipline that the law says is necessary to help the soul to humility. And the people give because it is a good thing to give alms. Even if they know the monks are fed besides, they will fill the bowls as the monks pass along. If the monks do not want it, there are the poor, there are the schoolboys, sons of the poorest of the people, who may often be in need of a meal; and if not, then there are the birds and the beasts. It is a good thing to give alms—good for yourself, I mean. So

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that this daily procession does good in two ways: it is good for the monk because he learns humility; it is good for the people because they have thereby offered them a chance of giving a little alms. Even the poorest may be able to give his spoonful of rice. All is accepted. Think not a great gift is more acceptable than a little one. You must judge by the giver's heart.

At every feast, every rejoicing, the central feature is presents to the monks. If a man put his son into a monastery, if he make merry at a stroke of good fortune, if he wish to celebrate a mark of favour from government, the principal ceremony of the feast will be presents to monks. They must be presents such as the monks can accept; of course, that is understood.

Therefore a man enters a monastery simply for this: to keep his body in health by perfect moderation and careful conduct, and to prepare his soul for heaven by meditation. That is the meaning of it all.

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If you see a grove of trees before you on your ride, mangoes and tamarinds in clusters, with palms nodding overhead, and great broad-leaved plantains and flowering shrubs below, you may be sure that there is a monastery, for it is one of the commands to the monks of the Buddha to live under the shade of lofty trees, and this command they always keep. They are most beautiful, many of these monasteries — great buildings of dark-brown teak, weather-stained, with two or three roofs one above the other, and at one end a spire tapering up until it ends in a gilded 'tee.' Many of the monasteries

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was not known. You paid a rupee, and took the change in rice or other commodities.

The excitement of the great day of the full moon began in the morning, about ten o'clock, with the offerings to the monks. Outside the village gate there was a piece of straight road, dry and open, and on each side of this, in rows, were the people with their gifts; mostly they were eatables. You see that it is very difficult to find any variety of things to give a monk; he is very strictly limited in the things he is allowed to receive. Garments, yellow garments, curtains to partition off corners of the monasteries and keep away the draughts, sacred books and eatables—that is nearly all. But eatables allow a very wide range. A monk may accept and eat any food—not drink, of course—provided he eat but the one big meal a day before noon; and so most of the offerings were eatables. Each donor knelt there upon the road with his or her offerings in a tray in front. There was rice cooked in all sorts of shapes, ordinary rice for eating with curry, and the sweet purple rice, cooked in bamboos and coming out in sticks. There were vegetables, too, of very many kinds, and sugar and cakes and oil and honey, and many other such things. There were a few, very few, books, for they are very hard to get, being all in manuscript; and there were one or two tapestry curtains; but there were heaps of flowers. I remember there was one girl whose whole offering was a few orchid sprays, and a little, very little, heap of common rice. She was so poor; her father and mother were dead, and she was not married. It was all she could give. She sat behind

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her little offering, as did all the donors. And my gift? Well, although an English official, I was not then very much richer than the people about me, so my gift must be small, too—a tin of biscuits, a tin or two of jam, a new pair of scissors. I did not sit behind them myself, but gave them to the headman to put with his offerings; for the monks were old friends of mine. Did I not live in one of their monasteries for over two months when we first came and camped there with a cavalry squadron? And if there is any merit in such little charity, as the Burmese say there is, why should I not gain it, too? The monks said my present was best of all, because it was so uncommon; and the biscuits, they said, though they did not taste of much while you were eating them, had a very pleasant after-taste that lasted a long time. They were like charity, maybe: that has a pleasant after-taste, too, they tell me.

When all the presents, with the donors behind them, dressed all in their best, were ready, the monks came. There were four monasteries near by, and the monks, perhaps in all thirty, old and young, monks and novices, came in one long procession, walking very slowly, with downcast eyes, between the rows of gifts and givers. They did not look at them at all. It is not proper for a monk to notice the gifts he receives; but schoolboys who came along behind attending on them, they saw and made remarks. Perhaps they saw the chance of some overflow of these good things coming their way. 'See,' one nudged the other; 'honey—what a lot! I can smell it, can't you?'

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

And, '*My mother!* what a lot of sweet rice! Who gave that? Oh, I see old U Hman.' 'I wonder what's in that tin box?' remarked one as he passed my biscuits. 'I hope it's coming to our monastery, any way.'

Thus the monks passed, paying no sort of attention, while the people knelt to them; and when the procession reached the end of the line of offerings, it went on without stopping, across the fields, the monks of each monastery going to their own place; and the givers of presents rose up and followed them, each carrying his or her gifts. And so they went across the fields till each little procession was lost to sight.

That was all the ceremony for the day, but at dusk the illuminations began. The little pagoda in the fields was lighted up nearly to its top with concentric rings of lamps till it blazed like a pyramid of flame, seen far across the night. All the people came there, and placed little offerings of flowers at the foot of the pagoda, or added each his candle to the big illumination.

The house of the headman of the village was lit up with a few rows of lamps, and all the monasteries, too, were lit. There were no restaurants—everyone was at home, you see—but there were one or two little stalls, at which you could buy a cheroot, or even perhaps a cup of vermicelli; and there was a dance. It was only the village girls who had been taught, partly by their own mothers, partly by an old man, who knew something of the business. They did not dance very well, perhaps; they were none of them very beautiful; but what matter?

pagodas and those throughout the country are descendants of the pagoda slaves.

Beggars are rated below the pagoda slaves - but, because of the Buddhist merit associated with giving do well for themselves. The beggars live in communities on the outskirts of the town often in cemeteries. They are thought to exhume the dead to get the coins placed in the mouth of the deceased to ensure expenses on his journey to heaven. The wood of the coffin is believed to be used in constructing their huts. Professional undertakers or morticians are regarded with horror since they like the beggars, make their living from the dead. The functions of burial are performed gratis by the entire village. A story is currently going round the University dormitories telling of an immensely wealthy Burmese coffin maker in Rangoon who has offered riches to the young man who will marry his beautiful daughter. When the future seems blank the students' friend advises "Hey, why don't you go and marry the coffin maker's daughter?" It seems that the money would scarcely compensate for the social discrimination. The extent to which the occupation classes are rigid in marriage and other social exchanges is an interesting problem.

A young man is obliged to remain within the occupation class of his family or to rise to greater heights. He is advised at an early age to "be simple, aim high, and tell the truth." When children play at dacoits (thieves) of other "low class" games their parents object to their low aspirations and advise them to play nobles and ministers. One would feel justified in remaining idle rather than accept a position below that of his birth. It is better to accept a clerks job at a low salary than an artisans at a high salary. On the other hand those born into lower status occupation groups tend to be satisfied with their state as a condition of birth. In Rangoon, however, even the hawkers may have ambitions to achieve fame and fortune. The opportunities for social mobility is greater in the towns and cities but difinitely restricted in the villages.

Apprenticeship to trades begins at the age of 12 to 14 years, and usually lasts for several years. Ordinarily the youth is attached to the shop of a relative where he lives and is payed a subsistence wage while learning. The key to high positions lies in education in

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the husband is too old to work. Aged parents are invariably respected but those who can still support themselves are "worshipped". Parents do not rely on their sons who have their own families to support but feel that their daughters will always "bring them a cup of curry".

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The third urge is to have wealth to donate to the Buddhist church. This is regarded as a sound investment since it not only brings a most satisfying honour especially in old age (to be a "pagoda giver") but also counts as merit credited to the individual's account in eternity.

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Competition is keenly felt between individuals and families of the same occupation group or adjacent groups but not between the lower and upper classes. An exception is where family traditional land has changed hands - and hard feelings may persist. A carpenter's family does not envy and covet the riches of a government official's family. His lot is due to KARMA and even if he wished to attain such fortune it would be beyond his abilities. More important, it is not expected of him. So the carpenter is content with cheap jewelry for his women and an occasional gold coin - but the pattern is the same as for the upper class. However among the individuals and families of an occupation level there is much rivalry for the benefits wealth can bring. It is a point of pride to have the largest diamonds at a social function, and to give the biggest pagoda. Wives brag that their husbands "prevent the hairs of their hands from singeing" - that they have servants to cook. Rank and recognition are based on these considerations.

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The women of the family exert powerful influence in financial matters and are respected for their sound judgement. Women's occupations include cigar manufacturing, pottery making, and especially shop keeping.

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The beginning of an enterprise is conditioned by the wisdom of the ancients and especially the date and place which are given by formula in the Burmese calendar. There are YET-NAYA (day king of) "fortunate days" and PYAD-GYADA "unlucky days". For example the calendar announces that Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays of a particular month are fortunate days to begin enterprises, and other days either unfortunate or neutral. Rangoon sophisticates (but never villagers) tell such stories as this: Two phongyis travelled by boat; the first boarded the boat on a fortunate day to begin travelling. The next day the boat came to the second phongyi's village. This was an unfortunate

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day on the calendar but the second phongyi decided to embark anyway. Both phongyis were lost when the boat sank that day.

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The revered position of phongyis is open to all regardless of birth or position. It is felt that some take up the robe because they are unsuccessful in life, or wish an "easy living" - but perhaps this attitude is one of modern sophisticates. Certainly the dominant position of the brotherhood is unchallenged. Occasionally differences arise between the headman and the phongyis of a village. But the phongyis invariably prevail. Offending laymen can be "deprived the gate of heaven" by phongyis refusing to accept HSOON, alms, from th This is called inverting the begging bowl THA-KHIT-MAUK-TAI (Begging bowl-upturn) and is the current phrase for any sort of a "strike".

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Some unprincipalled phongyis have sought to enrich themselves by accepting gifts of land or other property, or by selling gifts for money to traders. When they leave the brotherhood and become laymen again this property becomes theirs. Such occurrences appear to be rare and are controlled by stipulations of the givers. For example a donor would hesitate to give paddy land to a suspected phongyi but might agree to giving the crops while retaining title.

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The government or administrative class is looked up to with great respect - in part a carry over from the days of royalty, in part an attitude towards power and influence. However, while the villager today may not know the details of the new constitution he knows there is a "code" wherein he can secure impartial justice.

Major Village Ceremonies

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With regard to religion there are four ceremonies which all the people in the village observe. These are: PAWAY THA NAR (give away ceremony), KA HTEIN (opening ceremony of end of lent), HSU TAUNG PYI (wish-ask-fulfil) pagoda festival in the hot weather, and the KASON NYAUNG YE THUN (month of Kason-banyan tree-water pouring). There are also other ceremonies which are celebrated individually and according to personal preference and requirements, such as the Noviciation ceremony and the other monthly festivals which are celebrated throughout the rest of the country.

The PAWAY THA NAR ceremony marks the end of the Buddhist Lent. It is held on the full moon of Thadingyut. At this time new robes are donated to the phongyis and all visitors are feasted. For this festival a meeting of elders in the village is convened. These elders then make arrangements and send out invitations to 30 or 35 phongyis to come to the village and partake of the HSOON and the other gifts that are to be donated. There are only three phongyis ordinarily resident in the village; the rest have to be invited over from the phongyi kyaungs in the countryside around. When the phongyis have been invited, the village is divided up into 30 or 35 groups of 10 to 20 houses each, and each of these groups sends one representative to the meeting. Then names of the several phongyis are placed in a box and each of the group representatives has to draw out one name. This name he carries back to his group, and the individual families in his group donate as much as they can, or as much as their reverence for this particular phongyi inspires them to. These donations can take various forms - such as robes, HSOON, coconuts, bananas, toffee, etc. Sometimes one single person in the group undertakes to donate everything for his group out of his own pocket.

When phongyis from elsewhere are invited over, they bring with them three or four young boys each, and these boys also have to be fed. Ordinarily, there is only one KOYIN in the village, one U PAZIN and one phongyi. But when SHIN PYU time comes, the number of KOYINS rises to seven or eight.

All the members of the group bring their offerings and donations to the house of the group elder. The donations sometimes include even pillows and blankets. U Myaing gave a HSOON OTE container full of HSOON which cost him Rs. 15/- or Rs. 20/-, and also some face towels. These are given only once a year and U Myaing gave for himself and his household. Complete accounts are kept by the elders of all these donations.

The gifts that have been received have also to be divided by lot among the phongyis. Since the number and quality of the donations from the various groups are bound to vary, everything is pooled and divided again as equally as possible into as many piles as there are phongyis. Then the phongyis have to draw lots as to who shall get which pile.

The KAHTEIN ceremony is also celebrated by the village as a whole. A feast is given to between two and three thousand people. Thirty or thirty five phongyis from the neighbouring villages are put up at the village phongyi kyaung. The money which is needed for the ceremony is collected in the village. U Myaing had to give about fifty or sixty rupees because he could afford to do so. Collections from the whole village amounted to between Rs. 1,500/- for later; it is used to donate to phonhyis and buy robes for them. No one demands a checking of the accounts, but those who are in charge read these accounts aloud before the assembled villagers. An orchestra and PYAZAT (play) is hired for the KAHTEIN ceremony. There is also a big PADETHAR (a gift tree) which is planted in the ground and anyone can come and hang gifts onto the branches of this tree - such as begging bowls, robes, tinned biscuits, exercise books, pencils, slippers [illegible], umbrellas, sacks of rice, toffee, etc. Later, these

phongyis have to draw lots for these. 796 735

There are thirty days during which the KAHTEIN ceremony can be held - from the full moon of Thadingyut to the full moon of Tasaungmon When the phongyis have been given HSOON, the ceremony is over. But preparations have to be made four or five days ahead for building the equipment, for cooking the food, for rehearsing the play to be put up by the youngsan, etc.

The Tagu month festival is a religious festival and is celebrated in their village at the HSU TAUNG PYE pagoda. Collections are taken, and people donate from Rs. 2/- or Rs. 5/- right up to Rs. 300/- each. A ZAT troupe is engaged for the occasion, and they are paid at the rate of Rs. 150/- or Rs. 200/- a night for six or seven nights. This festival takes place on the full moon of the month of Tagu. Beginning from the eve of the full moon, people start coming to the pagoda bringing gifts of fruit, PAUK PAUK HSOTE trifle, toffees, bread, cheroots, betel boxes GYIN THOKE trifle, etc., and these people have to be fed too. U Myaing donated between forty and sixty rupees; while people who are rich donate between three hundred and four hundred rupees. (U Myaing's village of Pathee is divided by a fork in the river into three sub-villages, and when collections are taken they are only confined to one's own side of the river.) Enough food is prepared to feed three or four thousand people. Butter is bought by the kerosene tin, ripe bananas, fried fish, pork, etc., and the guests are fed till everyone is satisfied. About twenty baskets of rice have to be boiled by about forty to fifty people.

The guests are fed in three rest houses, each holding fifty people at a time. Even so, there are so many guests that some people have to return home without having eaten anything at all, and even though a lot of food still remain. The guests who come are both Karens and Burmans, and when they come they sometimes bring along cows or horses which have decorations and gifts hung on them. Anyone who so desires can go and hang his gift on to the animal as well.

Everyone contributes his or her labour. It is not good to hold back. When there is a festival or a ceremony in the KLAING, all the families lock up their houses and go over to help. Even fish coming down to the IN are not picked up til the festival is over. Everyone helps in getting up festivals. Burmans and Karens all come to help at some household which intends to give charity on a grand scale. [476]

U Myaing's Shifting Relationship to Buddhism

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In an interview U Myaing was questioned as to his relationship to Buddhism as a "taker of lives" (fisherman). His sense of guilt in Pantanaw where he fished and relief from this in the camp is given below verbatim from the interview.

42. Q. Would you tell U Myaing that I as a foreigner understand very little about Buddhism but I've heard that the fishermen who take lives of the fish are regarded unfavourably. Ask him if this is true.
A. (U.'.) There are the 5 SIKKHA (commandments - Pali: KARA - to do). Thou shalt not take the life of others. Thou shalt not wrong the wife and offspring of another. Abstain from intoxicants and from stealing the property of others. We have to observe these. The Buddha has preached it.
Q. Isn't U Myaing, in working the IN, taking the lives of the fish?
A. Yes, I am taking the lives of the fish. I have to do it to get food - to make a living.
Q. But you do not wish to take life?

for an adult and 8 annas for a child."

In camp U Myaing does not play cards very much except when at funerals to pass the night away. His total stakes on such occasions are only about eight annas or a rupee. He has never been to the races, and he never goes about town for fun. He does not go visiting much except when on business. When he does go, he visits Hla Hain, his first cousin who lives in HSIN-MIN-KWET-THIT, and his cousin Ma Sein Naing who lives in Ahlone. In Rangoon there are about 40,000 to 60,000 refugees from Pantanaw district. Sometimes he visits other people whom he knew at the village. However, in a single year his purely social visits to people outside of the camp totals only three visits - one visit each to three houses.

Dr. Orr, Dr. Sheppard, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Musgrave are the only white men he has met. He does not know any other Americans or Englishmen.

U Myaing has not gone to the pagoda once in the present month. During the past month, when he was working at the Jubilee Hall, he used to cross the pagoda platform twice a day going to and coming from his work. In the last year he donated some money at the Shwe Dagon. He gave 2 annas on three occasions four annas on 6 occasions, and once, when he drew his monthly pay, he donated a rupee. Apart from these, he donated money 6 or 7 times during the first one or two months of their arrival, during the time when he was going around selling mats. He gave altogether three or four rupees in these six or seven times.

Only Daw Aw Zar regularly goes to the pagoda solely for the sake of worship and prayer. Ma Aye Myaing has been there about five times on three occasions, but, they were while she was on her way elsewhere, and only once or twice purely for worship. Her total offerings amount to only about a rupee. Daw Aw Zar remarked that they would not have had the opportunity of praying at this great pagoda if they were still in Pantanaw. Daw Aw Zar gives offerings of flowers, money, candles and incense, and goes up the pagoda frequently.

In his worship, U Myaing recites the 5 SILAS. He prays for

17; Orr E-5 (1950-1951) 1951 AP1 Burma
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represented by the boat and shack dwellers of Rangoon's water-front as well as the beggar class of the villages.

Future Studies: This study has explored a portion of the Burmese culture pattern seen in dynamic situation of one family's case. It has indicated the importance of the family unit in Burmese society and expressed qualitatively two levels or standards of living. A study of a functioning community to define the interworkings of the family group and other social groups is being carried out at the present time by the Burma Community Research Project of the Department of Anthropology, University of Rangoon. The hypothesis developed in this paper will be further explored and new concepts of Burmese culture and society developed in the village project.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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29. NOVICES MAKING THE ROUND FOR DAILY FOOD (P. 18).

CHAPTER III

ADOLESCENCE

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30. THAMI-U ARRAYED FOR HER FETE.

BETWEEN the ages of ten and sixteen Burman lads enter upon the monastic novitiate, an occasion celebrated with a brilliant fête. The adoption of a religious life by girls is much less general, even for the short time it is embraced by the youths; and when it is adopted, there is no ceremony. But a holiday answering to that of the boy's novitiate is held in honour of the girl, especially when she is the first-born child—*thamí-u*. In her case the ear-boring ceremony, if not the piercing itself, is deferred to the age of ten or twelve. The child, equipped in royal attire, or an imitation of it, and wearing a queen's crown (*sĭbŏn*), is the centre of a great gathering of relatives and friends, who are entertained with music and plays.

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The lad who has prepared to renounce the world for a season, or it may be for life, is called *shinlàung*. The *shinlàung* festivals usher in the religious or lenten season—*wā*, June to September—the season of rain in Bahár,

p. 14

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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37. SHINLAUNG RENEWING HIS PRAYER.

the world, but not from observation by the world. Great as is the homage accorded to him by the laity, a recluse who should disgrace his cloth—a thing almost unknown — would be promptly unfrocked by them.

For their sustenance the novices and regular recluses depend upon alms. They receive these in kind and according to daily need. Their appeal is mute. The morning after his reception the novice with his brethren will halt in front of his own parents' house and the houses of the neighbours to receive such dole of food as is offered (No. 29). He will not look to right or left, but keep his eyes rooted on the ground, making no sign beyond raising the cover of his alms-bowl. The recluse may not ask for anything whatever, nor even express a predilection. The food, ripe or ready-cooked, as the case may be, is doled indiscriminately into the *thahkit* from the east side, usually by a woman of the house. A woman should not stand in the shadow of a recluse, of a shrine, *zedi*, temple or image. She should not occupy an upper floor when a recluse happens to be beneath, nor enter a *Thein*, nor occupy a higher place with respect to men (p. 72). Food given in a religious spirit, as above described, is called *sun*. The recluses when collecting *sun* are generally followed by a couple of scholars bearing a yoke and basket to receive larger offerings on behalf of the monastery (No. 41).

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38. GOYIN MAKING OBEISANCE.

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Those probationers who remain in the monastery for several years—reckoned by Lents (*wa*)—and who aspire to full membership of the Assembly, read with the recluse Pâli texts of the Tripitaka, and the commentaries on these, and commit portions, sometimes whole books of the canon, to memory. Recluses of standing and also laymen take part in these exercises.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

kambawá. The laity assembled outside the precincts let off rockets and guns in celebration of the event. Finally, the ceremony of *yaṅtcha*, the pouring of water (No. 100), is performed by the grantor of the site—as at every other

48. ILLUMINATED KAMBAWA.

religious dedication—to signify that the property has been dedicated for ever. The precincts of the *thein* are marked by low boundary pillars, mostly of Sagáing marble, set in the trench, which is then filled in. A different form of *thein* is the *ye-thein*, which is built over the water to effect its isolation.

Although the *yahán*, as already stated, may not ask for anything, he may decline what is offered. He signifies this by inverting his *thabít* (*thabeit-hmauk*). The action has become a symbol for excommunication. The *yahán* might assemble in the *thein* and perform *thabít-hmauk* against a layman for heinous wickedness. His house would be passed by in collecting *sun* and all offerings tendered by him refused. The practice has become obsolete; it is said to have no warrant in the scriptures, and to be contrary to their spirit.

47. SUN SENT BY THE KYAUNGTABA.

Where the people are very prosperous and the *yahán* are not many, the collecting of *sun* in the streets has sunk to a formality observed by the novices only, who on return to the monastery empty their *thabèit* to the dogs. But in other circumstances the sojourner *yahán*, novices and scholars live on the *sun*. An ordinance of the Buddha dispenses the *yahán* from collecting his food from house to house if there be pious people who proffer him his sustenance at his abode. The founder of the monastery (*Kyaung-tagá*), who nomin

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
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49. FOREST KYAUNG.

ates the incumbent, regularly undertakes the support of the *phúdyí*, and frequently of his sojourner *yahán* as well. The food, which is the best of its kind, is brought every morning by the daughters and young children of the supporter, or, in the case of joint support, by children of the leading families in turn. An ornamented vessel is used, having a tall finial to the cover (*ht*). The supplies are received by the lay scholars or the novices, and by them served to the *yahán*. The principal meal is taken shortly before noon, for no food may be eaten after that hour till the following sunrise. Water may be drunk and betel chewed at any time. Tobacco-smoking is discountenanced, especially in Burma Proper, where the religious views are strictest. Burma furnishes the standard both for scholarship and practice, and trains most of the incumbents of the monasteries of Pegu. Scholars and novices may prepare food at the monastery from raw supplies. These the *yahán* may not even handle. Hired labour (*kappiza dayaka*) may be attached to the monastery by the supporter for the preparation of food and other services. In some cases lands have been dedicated for the maintenance of monasteries and temples. But the *yahán* have no concern with their administration. Supplies of raiment, chattels and food are dedicated to the use of the recluses when the distinction of their presence is solicited, especially at *shinlaung* fêtes and funerals. The annual provision of raiment (*kathín thingán*) is made between the months of *Thadingyut* and *Tasáungmón*. The offerings of necessaries are supplemented by accessories of every sort —books and writing materials, mats,

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50. VILLAGE KYAUNG.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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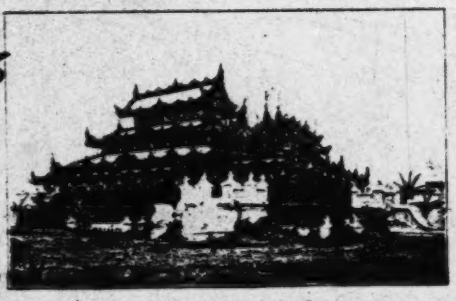

51. KYAUNG AT THE CAPITAL.

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carpets, cushions, handkerchiefs, tables, chairs, betel-boxes and spittoons, glass-ware and crockery, lamps, chandeliers, clocks, knicknacks and furniture, always to the exclusion of gold and silver. Gilt wares are permissible.

The strict *yahán* should prepare his shelter for himself, in an unfrequented place. But by the dispensation already referred to, he may avail himself of a solitary dwelling proffered for his use, and this is invariably the case. Not merely are these schools numerous, but they are the most spacious, substantial, and ornate edifices in the land. Many of them are of palatial size and appointments. The Burman finds nothing too good or too beautiful for those who subject themselves to the restraint of the recluse. The recluse on his part is conventionally oblivious of the magnificence that surrounds him. It is not for him to deprecate. The religious merit of the work, which furnishes the motive of the founder, is proportioned to the outlay upon it. From the bamboo *kyaung* in the forest costing a hundred rupees or less, individuals spend up to hundreds of thousands on the palatial monasteries of the towns (*cf.* p. 75).

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When the incumbent of a monastery removes or dies, the senior sojourner (*upazín*) may receive his place as *pôndyí*. Otherwise an *upazín* is invited from elsewhere, or the *pôndyí* of another *kyaung* is prevailed upon to move. The *upazín* who has become *pôndyí* defers to his preceptor as before. Every monastery has a titular Pâli appellation, such as *Thilo-ekkaya kyaung*, Letter-of-the-Law monastery.

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There is no hierarchy in the Assembly of *yahán*. But it commonly happens that a number of monasteries recognise a venerable teacher as referee upon matters of scholarship

52. PALACE KYAUNG.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1931 APl Burma
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60. DECADENT KYAUNG.

Gothic, especially in the richness of the *ensemble*. But the Burman decoration does not strike the eye as an efflorescence of the structure so much as an overlaying of it. The grandest work produces the effect of an elaborate model rather than a monumental achievement. The perspicuity of the play of forces operating in the structure, out of which the poetry of Gothic architecture flows, has a parallel in the Burman boat-building. But the effort which the land architecture incorporates, to interpret a masonry style in wood, was naturally productive of incongruities, despite the fact that the masonry was itself an interpretation of still earlier wood building. The outward incongruities have been mitigated in the unique style in which the genius of Burma has found expression. The stiff and monotonous feather-ornament of the Hindu gable (No. 74) has developed into the Burman flamboyant decoration. The bold finial is the sole element of the original which has been preserved literally (No. 62). The graduated ornament of the *pyatthat*, soaring above the verdure, recalls the proportions of some budding head-of-bloom—a case in point of the theory of the sources of architectural types, in the insensible suggestions of natural objects, expressed by Herbert Spencer. (*Essays*, vol. ii.) Through the Burman treatment types other than architectural, which Burma has borrowed, acquire a new and distinctive interest.

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When a *kyaung*, or any work of public utility, has been undertaken by the people of a village jointly, it is kept in good repair. But when it has been carried out at the cost of an individual—and this applies to most of the public works—the repairs are left to the founder and to his family, who have frequently

61. ORNAMENTATION OF KYAUNG.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

40. DAYIN ORNAMENT.

exhausted their resources in the building of it. In the moist region the effects of rain and vegetation combine to dilapidate buildings in less than a lifetime. The stone-grey and lichen-covered wood attains the distinction of age before its time. In the dry zone of Burma Proper fires are very frequent. Few examples of wood architecture of over a century old exist anywhere. It is scarcely possible to trace the steps by which the present style developed from the Indian models.

As distinguished from the *kyaung*, *thein*, and other wood buildings, the *Zedi*, which are such a prominent feature of Burma and Siam, are of masonry. In Arakán they are of hewn stone; elsewhere they are of brick plastered with lime. It is a point of honour with the Buddhists of those countries to crown every eminence with a *zedi*. The chief *zedi* of a place—*Payá-dyí*—is on the highest ground in the vicinity, and is cared for by the public. The subsidiary *zedi*, the *wut*, *tazáung*, and other accessories which cluster around the *Payá-dyí*, are the work of private individuals. Old and new are huddled in chaotic profusion. Many erections are ruinous and disregarded. But so long as a vestige of the original structure, remains, it monopolises the site. The development of the conical *zedi* may be traced, step by step, from the ancient temple. Originally, *zedi* are shrines for relics of the Buddha—the Indian *Stupa*, *tôp*, *dágaba*, *dagôba*, of which last "pagoda" is a transposition. The vast majority of *zedi* only pretend to symbolize actual shrines. The shrines of reputed relics are

41. DETAIL OF EAVES AND GABLE

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

88. MEITHILA ON THE ROUND FOR SUN.

struggles. Apart from this and the serfdom referred to at p. 32, slavery has only played a subordinate *rôle* in Burma within historic times. The *payadyún*, and they alone, are treated as outcasts by both of these populations. They beg for alms and also appropriate the offerings brought to the shrines in profusion at festivals. Their right to beg is admitted, although they frequently accumulate money and build fine houses.

Lepers (*anû*) in many cases quit their families of their own accord and settle in the *payadyún* colony. In some places they were compelled to do so. The settlements have thus acquired the semblance of leper colonies. There are a few country villages of this character. Indigent lepers beg for alms. In 1891 there were 6,000 lepers in Burma, the highest ratio in the Indian Empire. There are now four leper asylums. Casual mendicancy is almost unknown in Burma.

The Burman and Brahman soothsayers (p. 158) are regular frequenters of the shrines. The Burman astrologer (*bedin-sayâ*) casts horoscopes on the Brahman model (No. 279) and designates the days auspicious for undertakings. He takes his name from proficiency in reckoning, and is consulted about business calculations that cannot be done mentally.

The Buddhist duty-days (*âbôt-ne, thadin*) follow the quarters of the moon. They are kept regularly during lent. On these days the pious laity of both sexes and sedate years observe the rule of *pôthudaw* and *meithila* from sunrise to sunrise (*âbôt-saung*). They adopt sober attire, or else white cotton clothing, which is considered the plainest of any. In the forenoon men and women separately repair to the temple rest-houses, whither food for the morning meal, which has been collected the previous evening from religious donors

89. SOOTHSAYER.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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[526]
[241]
[821]

414. WATER-THROWING AT NEW-YEAR.

Party feeling, which often runs high between the quarters of a village, with their rival *kyaung* and *zedi*, finds an outlet at *Tagú* in the tug-of-war (*tun-swè*). As the superstitious whistle for the wind, so do they expect to tug in the monsoon by this means, at the season when everything is panting for rain.

After *Tagú*, the next festival season is *Wàzò*—in June—the commencement of the Buddhist Lent. This season is signalised by the *Shinláung fêtes*, described in Chapter III. During Lent there is no regular festival.

The great festival of *Thadìndyút* celebrates the close of Lent. It falls in October, when the rains are generally over, and is the one for which the most extensive preparations are made. Every festival is signalised by the offerings made to the *yahán*. But now they are literally "poured" in profusion, as the word implies (*sun-láung*). *Yazamá*—paths fenced with bamboo trellis, such as those prepared for the progress of royalty—are got ready along the chief thoroughfare. Through these on the morning of the great day the *yahán* defile in endless procession. As many as a thousand *yahán* may be invited to receive the *Thadìndyút* offerings in a large town. The offerings are poured into the alms-bowls by the laity; scholars are stationed at intervals to relieve the *yahán* of their loads of offerings. After the *yahán* come *pòthudaw* and *mèthilá*. Both ends of the *yazamá* are decorated with arches of bamboo and tinsel. About these are grouped life-size figures of mythical import—dragons to guard the entrance, princes and princesses of the *nats* to take part in the honour done to the *Thingá* (No. 151). In the evenings fire-

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735]

415. KANBON PROCESSION AT NEW-YEAR.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
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Old men will retire to the monastery to end their days there, and younger men, in poverty or other distress, will flee the world for a time. The hospitality of the monks has sometimes been more charitable than discriminate, a circumstances which has brought some monasteries into disrepute, for these temporary inhabitants are allowed to wear the yellow robe, and some are criminals, sheltering from justice. Father Sangermano reports the rescue of prisoners condemned to death. "In thus saving the lives of criminals, (the monks) believe that, as their law forbids them to kill, it must be meritorious to preserve the lives of others."[34]

The monastery is the social centre of the village. Buddhism in Burma is gaily attired, a religion of festival. Frequently there will be an open-air performance in the moonlight, when a birth-story of the Buddha is dramatized. All this spirited, colourful life gathers around the monastery.

But perhaps the Order's most valuable service to the community is the function fulfilled by the monk as *counsellor*. A group of villagers may gather for a special instruction, others may attend when the monks assemble for devotions, but the monastery is not regarded as a preaching centre or as a place of public worship. In modern times, crowds have flocked to hear the Monyin Sayadaw. Generally, however, the approach in this respect is individual. It is as the individual adviser of each villager that the monk's influence is most strongly felt.

In many and tangible ways, therefore, the monastery serves the community, but it is probable that the villager himself reveres the monk more for services which are intangible and may not appear so valuable to sceptical observers. Early in the morning, the monk, attended by *koyins*, will go the round of the faithful, receiving their offerings of rice in his begging bowl.[35] For the monk himself it is an exercise in humility, for the villager it is one of the chief means of increasing that *kutho* or worthiness which ensures him happiness in this life and the next.[36]

Most of all, however, it is those very aspects of the monk's vocation which distinguish him from the rest of the community, setting him apart, for which the monk is chiefly esteemed. It is because the greater part of his life is spent in spiritual exercises which the villagers do *not* share, that they value him most. The monastery stands for a Way of utter renun-

[34] *The Burmese Empire*, 3d. Edition, ed. J. Jardine, (London, 1895), chap. xv, p. 122.

[35] Thus *bhikku or bhikṣu*, usually translated monk, means, literally, mendicant. Strictly speaking, a *bhikku* is not a monk; cf. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part II (S.B.B.), p. 81, footnote.

[36] *Kutho* is frequently translated 'merit.' But 'worthiness' is more accurate.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
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its national, character. The frequent festivals not only enliven, they express and stabilise the community life. They are often local, but certain shrines, such as the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon, have become centres of pilgrimage. In a country which has had a strong tendency to de-centralization — the king's authority was often very weak — the Buddhist Order has made for cohesion, and, in modern times, Buddhist monks have been active in the movement for national independence.

In spite, however, of this social expression, Buddhism in Burma, as elsewhere, is very much a matter of *individual* concern. We have seen this individualism within the monastery. It is equally marked outside the monastery. One of the most popular *nats* is the story of Wethandaya, who, in order to gain his own salvation, gives away his wife and family to a rapacious Brahmin.[56] "Each must bear his own burden," is a favourite quotation.[57] Its primary reference may be to moral responsibility.

This brings us to the decidely *ethical* character of Burmese Buddhism. *Kutho* (worthiness) is the central concept here, and "it is clear that the Burmese Buddhists have a more *mathematical* conception of Merit than other folk." "The ordinary belief is very concrete — so many good deeds mean so much to one's credit in another world."[58] Sometimes very material rewards are indicated. "The reward for building a monastery is a palace in a *Nat* heaven with seven towers, and in this palace dwell seven hundred *Nat* wives.... For a gift of sticks for use in a bath room, the donor will be reborn with perfumed body."[59]

Almsgiving is a sure means of 'heaping up *Kutho*.' Since the benefit accruing to the donor partly depends on the worthiness of the object, the maintenance of religion is a valued means of self-help. Hence the many pagodas. Hence the gifts to the monasteries. There is no more coveted title than 'Builder of Monasteries.' Hence, too, the welcome to the monk as he comes in the early morning with his begging bowl. The monk may seem to be the chief recipient. But in the things which matter, he is the donor.

Though others may thus provide the opportunity, essentially the activity is self-help. Emphasis is laid on individual responsibility. It is something a man must do for himself.

It is something he can do. Thus the conception of *Kutho* challenges any animistic idea that man is altogether at the mercy of capricious spirits.

[56] *M.B.B.*, pp. 44, 103.
[57] *M.B.B.*, p. 45.
[58] *M.B.B.*, p. 51, p. 76. The usual, though inadequate translation of Kutho, as already observed, is Merit.
[59] *M.B.B.*, p. 51.